

REMARKS

The present amendment is submitted in order better to claim the invention. Support for claim 11, in which healthy donors or potential donors are tested, can be found in the specification as filed at page 14, line 21 through page 15, line 4 and page 15, line 24 through page 16, line 2.


It should be noted that the patients tested in the cited Zucker-Franklin et al. PNAS 1997 article were not healthy patients. This article merely disclosed that diseased patients had the tax protein. However, it was not known that HTLV-I or HTLV-II was transmittable merely if the tax protein were present in the blood. Therefore, if one skilled in the art did not know that HTLV-I or HTLV-II could be transmitted by a healthy person solely if this otherwise healthy person were "tax positive", there would be no reason to screen otherwise healthy blood donors or potential blood donors for this protein. Unlike conventional tests for HTLV-I or HTLV-II, which test for antibodies to the whole (entire) virus, the present invention tests only for the tax portion.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are now in condition for allowance, and favorable action thereon is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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